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beautiful.' We know of no production better fitted to correct this mistake, than the Dialogues, which we have mentioned. The author is an advocate for simplicity, though he shows no hostility to subdued ornament, and those occasional metaphors, which, in the excitement of description and argument, are thrown out burning from the heart.

If simplicity and a natural manner of expression are requisite to eloquence in general, how necessary is it to that species termed the eloquence of the pulpit. The truths of religion cannot be said to come 'mended' from the preacher's tongue, unless they are pronounced with plainness of speech, and are attended with an earnestness, resulting from a conviction of their importance. The subjects introduced in pulpit discussions are of too high and holy a nature to admit of the tawdry decorations, which an untutored imagination, especially when joined to a heart unmoved, would be inclined to communicate to them. This point deserves the more consideration, when it is felt, that without a chastened imagination and a correct taste, all attempts at extemporaneous eloquence will be likely to prove utterly unsuccessful. But a cultivated taste is not all, nor will freedom from puerilities and improprieties of expression alone make one eloquent; there are also required the earnestness of conviction, the genuine pathos of nature and truth, the flame of a heavenly animation kindling in the soul. It is the best policy for a public speaker to dispense with all tricks of rhetoric, which are fitted merely to amuse, and that profusion of ornament, which is the mark of a weak, and always of an undisciplined mind, and, whether his language be premeditated or extemporaneous, to have his own heart full of the subject, and to aim directly at the hearts of his hearers by the shortest avenues, and with the greatest possible power.

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#### ART. III.—*Goethe's Werke, &c.*

*The Works of Goethe.* Published by J. G. Cotta. 20 vols. Stuttgart and Tübingen. 1815—1819.

THE most eminent German writers have often been misunderstood, and their claims to admiration unjustly represented. The time is yet remembered, when German sentiment

and German metaphysics were common expressions of a disdainful criticism, and when the German poetry, though allowed to be original and various, was also proscribed as unnatural and exaggerated. If the principles of reciprocity and mutual justice are to be applied in the world of letters, there is no nation, which so signally merits a fair and impartial judgment from foreigners. In poetry, no less than in matters of science, they have been careful to become familiar with the best productions of the human mind, whatever may have been their origin, and by means of excellent translations they have incorporated them into their own literature. Shakspeare and Calderon are acted in German theatres; the novels of Scott are found in every literary circle; Tasso reaps new laurels in the disguise of the northern dialect; and Franklin teaches practical wisdom in the heart of Europe no less than in America.

The literature of a great nation must be approached with respect. If a good book contains the best thoughts and sentiments of a fine mind, 'the life blood of a master spirit,' the literature of a nation contains all the noble feelings, the creed, the morals, and the aspiration of a people. To condemn it in a mass, is to pronounce the sentence of worthlessness against a large part of the whole sum of human existence. Respect for human nature, therefore, allows no hasty judgments against a national literature, that is, against the wisdom of a whole nation, as collected and preserved by itself in written monuments.

The literature of a people, if it be good, will be peculiar; it will contain a description of emotions belonging to itself, of sensations which have not been aroused or indulged by others, of thoughts and sentiments new in themselves, or at least in the forms under which they are represented. For the perfect culture of the moral man it is necessary to become acquainted with all the operations of the heart and the mind; and since the experience of an individual is never sufficient to accomplish this end, and private examples seldom exhibit distinctly the character of the inward emotions, it is necessary to observe them as they appear in masses, to review the history of other times, to watch the nature of the affections as they are seen in the monuments of various nations, and so to become instructed in all the forms under which the passions have appeared.

A foreign literature will seldom be in strict harmony with the taste and associations acquired at home ; but this, far from being any objection to its excellence, confers on it an additional claim to attention. New views of man and of life are to be drawn from unexplored sources ; the great spectacle of the world is exhibited under a novel form. Yet the studious observer must be on his guard while forming his opinion, lest that which has remained unknown be pronounced unnatural, the sensibilities, which have not been cherished, be ridiculed as insincere, and any unusual delineation of the affections be regarded as an indication of bad taste and of a fondness for exaggeration. The literature of each nation is national, and the true critic must endeavor to regard it from the same point of view with the nation, on which it was designed to produce an effect. The whole sphere of the fine arts becomes changed by differences of climate, of situation, of national character. It is the same as to each particular effort ; its purpose must be known before its merit can be estimated. A painting, intended for a ceiling, would appear absurdly on the wall ; a beautiful ballad, which has its justification in a national superstition, may have no direct support in cool reason ; a play, of which the object is only to give a calm delineation of a state of mind, must not be judged by its effect on the stage ; the poetry of the oriental nations can hardly be found tolerable, except by those who read till they catch the spirit of the East ; nay, the Grecian drama itself, the most perfect monument of the union of genius and taste, does not seem impassioned and powerful except to the scholar.

Let these remarks be applied to the literature of Germany. If on first acquaintance it offend, or seem strange and unnatural, this is nothing more than might have been expected ; for the culture, and consequently the productions of the Germans, have much that is original and peculiar ; and every peculiarity, both in the forms and in the subjects of their works, only makes them more worthy of respect, just as reverence is especially due to any one, who can teach new lessons on life and the mode of regulating the passions.

Goethe is the most national poet of the Germans, the most fit representative of their literature, and, more nearly than any other, the universal favorite of his countrymen. Here

are reasons enough for examining his works with a willingness to discover beauties, and for condemning any of them, if any are to be condemned, with hesitation. There is still another reason for speaking of him with respect. He was born in the same year with Alfieri, and is consequently now more than seventy six years of age. And can reverence be denied to the old age of an industrious and popular writer, whose life may be traced in the monuments of his mind?

Of the value of Goethe's poetry different opinions may exist; but it is too late to dispute his genius. To direct the taste and govern the thoughts of the many, is one of the clearest indications of intellectual power. It is now more than fifty years since Goethe entered the lists of literary competition, and during the whole of that period he has held possession of public admiration. Pericles is acknowledged to have been a consummate statesman, because he for forty years preserved his supremacy in the councils of one city; in the German republic of letters, opinions are as free and as fickle, as was the popular voice at Athens; and he, who has had them in his favor for more than half a century, and has all that time been hazarding his reputation by new efforts, must certainly have a powerful, a rich, and an inventive mind.

Popularity, extensive and lasting popularity, is the least questionable testimony to poetic excellence. If the multitude and the critic are at variance, the latter is in the wrong. The poet reflects the passions and sentiments of men; he cannot please long and widely, unless he reflects them with truth. If his pictures are universally recognised, they cannot but be executed with fidelity. All the reasonings of cavillers cannot weaken Homer's claim to veneration; human nature itself rises up and declares him to be her greatest bard; and she expresses her judgment in the collected voices of ages and nations.

The literary history of Goethe is most intimately connected with that of his private life. The place of his birth and early residence facilitated the acquisition of his native language in all its extent. The dialects of the Rhine lands are unsettled, and he, who is accustomed to them from his infancy, finds it easy to adopt all the words, which are elsewhere in currency. A native of Holstein, or the remoter Prussia, could hardly have acquired the same copiousness and versa-

tility in the use of the German. It was in Frankfurt also, the free imperial city, the theatre of the emperor's coronation, that the imagination of Goethe learned to employ itself on images of ancient times.

The progress of the culture of his mind may be traced in his works, where the results of studies, which had an influence on his character, and the lively feelings of youth, are exhibited in their most glowing colors. At the university of Leipzig he found little that was in harmony with his poetic inclinations; he was therefore obliged to look into his own heart and entrust its experiences to verse. The productions of his early life partake of the character of his mind. They contain the expressions of feelings, vehement and uncontrolled, the clear indications of great powers, not yet directed by reflection nor restrained by taste. Both *Goetz* and *Werther* bear the impress of genius, and are strictly national works. They are also both the results of Goethe's early predilections and passions. In the drama he concentrated all that had passed through his mind, while studying the antiquities of Germany, and the monuments of knighthood; and in *Werther* he introduced all that observation and the experience of his own heart had taught him of the wasting vehemence of love. This is not the highest kind of fine writing. Goethe himself was soon to be governed by other views. A poet must be able to do more than feel deeply, and breathe what he has felt into words. Preserving his own mind serene, he must observe and express whatever is pure, and delicate, and noble in human nature and the universe.

Two years after the appearance of *Werther*, Goethe is found at Weimar, in the full enjoyment of popular applause, possessed of the affectionate regard of the prince, who had just inherited the ducal purple, surrounded in the city by the best artists and scholars of Germany, and admired at court by a circle celebrated for its refinement, elegance, and taste for intellectual enjoyments. Here, then, the youthful poet was in a situation to finish the discipline and education of his mind. The inspiration of the feelings was succeeded by that of taste; the vehemence of the passions became moderated and chastened into elegance.

In due time Goethe was honored with the various civil titles, which are most coveted by his countrymen. It is

known that the pencil of Raphael almost made him a cardinal; Goethe, in honor of his skill in poetry, was actually introduced into the council of his sovereign, and the cabinet of his ministers. But he never was withdrawn from literature by political ambition. Devoted to the pursuit of letters, he found his happiness and his sphere of usefulness in following the impulse of his feelings. In this he forms an honorable exception to the many European scholars, who, moved by the desire of temporary distinction, have passed from literary occupations, which promised universal and lasting reputation, to the intrigues of courts, or the petty warfare of local politics. In seasons of difficulty it becomes a good citizen to sacrifice private duties to the public welfare and security; but in ordinary times the government will easily continue in successful operation, men of integrity and patriotism will be promoted to places of honor and responsibility, and a sufficient number be induced by common ambition to present themselves as candidates for public employment. It becomes then the duty of those, whose education has fitted them for the career of letters, to pursue that course, and not to abandon the sacred places of truth and knowledge, which need protection, to stand before the temple of liberty and social order, which is already secure.

To Goethe no praise belongs for having led a literary life; he has but lived for immortality, instead of living for the moment. And besides, in this he exercised no selfdenial; the strong passion of ambition was stifled in him by the still stronger passion for letters and the arts. He loved the Muse sincerely, and when he heard the distinct, melodious voice of the Goddess, he felt her superiority to her earthly rivals. But let the poet declare his own preference. In a production of a later period he expresses the feelings, which he has cherished through life.

#### MEINE GÖTTIN.

Welcher Unsterblichen  
Soll der höchste Preis seyn?  
Mit Niemand streit' ich,  
Aber ich geb' ihn  
Der ewig beweglichen,  
Immer neuen,  
Seltsamen Tochter Jovis,  
Seinem Schosskinde,  
Der Phantasie.

#### MY GODDESS.

Who of Heaven's immortal train  
Shall the highest prize obtain?  
Strife I would with all give o'er,  
But there's one, I'll aye adore,  
Ever new, and ever changing,  
Through the paths of marvel ranging,  
Dearest in her father's eye,  
Jove's own darling, Phantasy.

Denn ihr hat er  
Alle Launen,  
Die er sonst nur allein  
Sich vorbehält,  
Zugestanden,  
Und hat seine Freude  
An der Thörinn.

Sie mag rosenbekränzt  
Mit dem Lilienstängel  
Blumenthåler betreten,  
Sommervögeln gebieten,  
Und leichtnährenden Thau  
Mit Bienenlippen  
Von Blüthen saugen ;

Oder sie mag,  
Mit fliegendem Haar  
Uud düstern Blicke,  
Im Winde sausen  
Um Felsenwände,  
Und tausendfarbig,  
Wie morgen und abend,  
Immer wechselnd  
Wie Mondesblicke,  
Den Sterblichen scheinen.

Lasst uns alle  
Den vater preisen !  
Den alten, hohen,  
Der solch eine schöne,  
Unverwelkliche Gattinn  
Dem sterblichen menschen  
Gesellen mögen !

Denn uns allein  
Hat er sie verbunden  
Mit Himmelsband,  
Und ihr geboten,  
In Freud' und Elend,  
Als treue Gattinn,  
Nicht zu entweichen.

Alle die andern  
Armen Geschlechter  
Der kinderreichen  
Lebendigen Erde  
Wandeln und weiden  
In dunkeln Genuss  
Und trüben Schmerzen  
Des augenblicklichen  
Beschränkten Lebens,  
Beugt vom Joche  
Der Nothdurft.

Uns aber hat er  
Seine gewandteste,  
Verzärtelte Tochter,  
Freut euch ! gegönnt.  
Begegnet ihr lieblich

For to her, and her alone,  
All his secret whims are known ;  
And in all her faults' despite  
Is the maid her sire's delight.

Oft with aspect mild she goes,  
Decked with lilies and the rose,  
Walks among the flowery lands,  
Summer's insect swarm commands,  
And for food with honied lips  
Dew drops from the blossom sips.

Or with darker mien and hair  
Streaming loose in murky air,  
With the storm she rushes by,  
Whistling, where the crags are high,  
And with hues of thousand dyes  
Like the late and early skies,  
Changes and is changed again,  
Fast as moons, that wax and wane.

Him, the ancient sire we'll praise,  
Who, as partner of our days,  
Hath to mortal man allied  
Such a fair, unfading bride.

For to us alone she's given,  
And is bound by bonds of heaven .  
Still to be our faithful bride,  
And though joy, or wo betide,  
Ne'er to wander from our side.

Other tribes, that have their birth  
From the fruitful, teeming earth,  
All, through narrow life remain  
In dark pleasures, gloomy pain,  
Live their being's narrow round,  
To the passing moment bound,  
And unconscious roam and feed,  
Bent beneath the yoke of need.

But to us with kind intent  
He his frolic daughter sent,  
Nursed with fondest tenderness ;  
Welcome her with love's caress,



Wie einer Geliebten !  
 Lasst ihr die Würde  
 Der Frauen im Haus !

Und dass die alte  
 Schwiegermutter Weisheit  
 Das zarte Seelchen  
 Ja nicht beleid'ge !

Doch kenn' ich ihre Schwester,  
 Die ältere, gesetztere,  
 Meine stille Freundin ;  
 O dass die erst  
 Mit dem Lichte des Lebens  
 Sich von mir wende,  
 Die edle Treiberinn,  
 Trösterinn Hoffnung !

And take heed, that none but she  
 Mistress of the mansion be.

And of Wisdom's power beware,  
 Lest the old stepmother dare,  
 Rudely harm the tender fair.

Yet I know Jove's elder child,  
 Graver, and serenely mild,  
 My belov'd, my tranquil friend ;  
 From me never may she wend ;  
 She, that knows with ill to cope,  
 And to action urges,—Hope.

In the mean time a change was going forward in the character of Goethe's mind. Though possessed of public favor, sure of admiration, and conscious of unexhausted resources, he for twelve years published nothing of importance. But all the while he was making advances ; the fervor of youth was yielding to discretion ; the elegant and intelligent circles at the court, the men of letters at Weimar, a tour in Switzerland, reflection and study, contributed each in its degree to finish his education as a poet. At last, in 1786, he was seized with an irresistible longing to go beyond the Alps, and he was enabled to gratify the passion for travelling, that passion, which is stronger than ambition, which has relieved dethroned monarchs of their weariness, and allured statesmen from the career of public life ; which withdrew Cæsar from victory, and Cleopatra to gaze at the cataracts of the Nile, and gave to the most illustrious Swedish queen instead of a reign of glory a tomb in the Vatican. Had Italy nothing but its sky and its scenery, where nature has exhibited her loveliest forms and lavished her delicacies ; or its poetry, which contains all that can delight and elevate the imagination ; or its music, chaunted in the streets, given in full choirs in the churches, charming the senses by the artful combinations of harmony in the operas, and heard in all its tenderness and perfection at the vespers in St Peter's and the choruses of the Holy Week ; or its buildings and statues ; or its pictures, which exhibit not only all that is most beautiful in real life, but all that ideal loveliness, which the mind of man has been enabled to conceive ; or its recollections, not of the ancient heroes of the commonwealth only, but of Petrarch, Raphael

and Michael Angelo ; or lastly, the race which now dwells there ; it would be a country full of instruction for the poet, fit to enrich his mind with images, excite and diversify his inventive powers, and impart a poetic impulse to all his faculties. Goethe entered it in the best years of early manhood, possessing a mind already well disciplined, a cultivated taste, a lively perception of the beautiful, a judgment improved by study and fitted to observe and compare. What wonder, then, that a residence in Italy of two years should have had an important influence on his intellectual character. The generous fruit, which was a native of the northern soil, was ripened beneath an Italian sun. If in his works Goethe bestows on his princely patron higher eulogies, than republican pride can regard with complacency, who would measure the gratitude due for the advantage of a residence in Italy, a residence, which, besides the immediate gratification and enjoyment, necessarily forms an epoch in the private history of the mind ?

At the period of his return from Italy, the character and taste of Goethe were formed and established. Nothing remained for him but to delight the world with his ripened productions, and to continue to improve every talent and cherish every feeling, with which nature had blessed him. His *Faust*, the most wonderful and most original production of the German muse, had been an invention of his youth, but was now matured and finished with the strictest care. This work, though it exhibits vice in all its deformity, as essentially mean and hideous, is still not of a purely moral tendency ; and though abounding in sallies of genius, accurate delineations of man, and exhibitions of the heart, with all the strength and weakness of the passions, it is still liable to censure for its occasional levity, and its too daring extravagance. His *Iphigenia*, and his *Tasso*, are monuments of industrious genius, which his countrymen admire with one voice, and which posterity will not willingly suffer to perish. His mind was all the while acquiring new stores of thought, and his feelings, his taste in poetry, his love of the arts were gratified by the most varied studies. And this shows perhaps the only point, in which the inventive writer has the advantage over the man of science. The latter is more sure that industry will ultimately be followed by success, reputation, and opportunities of use-

fulness ; yet he must limit his investigations, concentrate his powers, and at the best connect the general culture of his understanding with a particular science. But it is the duty of the former to seek for continual change, a rapid succession of pleasant and noble sensations, to roam wherever there are flowers, to gather from the remotest parts the scattered objects of beauty, to contemplate excellence of one particular class, till the mind has become enriched by it, and then to pass onwards to new stores of information, and new sources of beauty, so that every principle of human nature, every passion, every feeling, and every power may be developed, disciplined, and brought to its highest perfection.

The later works of Goethe are characterised by dignity, composure, and deliberation. Having acquired a knowledge of man by a ready talent at observation, and having possessed himself of extensive learning, which, though it may in itself be barren, fertilises and adorns, he continued to write with perfect selfpossession, to plan with coolness, and to finish with effort and care. In a word, the years of his apprenticeship were over, and he had become a consummate master in his art. *Werther* had been written in four weeks. The later productions of Goethe were not the accidental effusions of a fine mind, but the finished works of an artist, considerate in the use of his resources, and regularly and harmoniously advancing to the accomplishment of his design. The dramatic poem, *Tasso*, the performance in which, perhaps, the German language appears in its most perfect state, bears marks of long study and care ; and *Wilhelm Meister* occupied the poet for more than fifteen years. The productions of Goethe are, therefore, instructive subjects of consideration to any, who are desirous of becoming acquainted with the secrets of fine writing, and wish, in the spirit of deeper criticism, to trace the formation of the poet's mind, and observe his skill in the use and combination of his materials.

Goethe is distinguished above his countrymen for the ease, grace, and variety of his style. He has had great influence on the German language, by showing how it may be successfully employed in the different departments of letters. When he commenced his career as a writer, he did not find a language already perfected and fixed by acknowledged standards. The style common among his earlier contemporaries.

was homely and uncouth. 'The fates,' says Goethe of himself, while his ears were delighted with the Italian dialect, 'the fates would have succeeded in making a poet of me, if the language had not proved an unconquerable obstacle.' And in another place he says, 'I have essayed many things, have sketched, engraved, painted in oil, have expressed many a conception in clay, yet I have been unstable, and have learned and executed nothing; one talent and one only I have learned to exercise almost with a master's skill, to write German. And thus, an ill starred poet, I waste my life and my art on the worst material.' These complaints respecting the unpoetical character of his language are curious; especially when we consider, that whatever may have been its character forty years ago, no continental dialect can now be compared with it for the copiousness, boldness, and beauty of its poetic expressions.

The variety of style, for which Goethe is distinguished, may further be urged in illustration of his genius. No two of his novels resemble each other in manner of execution, or the character of the invention, and in his poetical works he sometimes writes with the careful elegance, and collected sublimity of the ancients, and sometimes reproduces the light and fascinating beauties of the poets of chivalry. His *Hermann and Dorothea* is a strictly national poem, in which the German manners are described in a plain and almost homely manner, yet with inimitable truth; and again in his *Tasso*, a drama which has no other object than to depict a condition of mind, the nicest shades of sentiment, and the most exquisitely refined tastes, are described in language of golden harmony. In *Egmont* we find ourselves transported to the streets of Brussels, mixing in the popular clamors and complaints of the disaffected Netherlands; and it would almost seem, that the tragic muse of the Greeks had herself dictated *Iphigenia* to a worthy disciple of Euripides. And though the tragedy, which is intended to exhibit the chivalric age in Germany, is not of universal interest, yet it merited success, for it awakened a national spirit, it revived the proud feelings of knighthood, and showed, that the history of Germany could offer fit subjects for the exercise of poetic endowments.

If Goethe, amidst his unequalled success in Germany, has not obtained the suffrages of the other European nations, the

causes exist in the character of his works. They are not master pieces in the regular classes of literature. They appear as anomalous, because they are original, national, and unlike the foreign models. Besides, his efforts have not all been successful ones; and some works, in which his genius is apparent, are offensive from the indifference to moral effect pervading both their plan and their execution. A reason why many of his works cannot be popular in America is found in the nature of his subjects. Instead of describing sentiments of tenderness and true humanity, and depicting the feelings which warm, and cheer, and bless mankind in the seasons of bereavement or success, he has more frequently sketched the sorrows, which spring from the imagination, and the evils to which men have become exposed by the vices of refinement. He can, therefore, meet with sympathy only among those, who have felt or observed the anguish of similar mental suffering. In Germany the characters in the *Elective Affinities* are acknowledged to be drawn with agonising truth; but in the United States, thanks to the venerated sanctity of domestic attachment, the book would be thrown aside with incredulity as a false and dangerous libel on human nature.

On this point of imaginative distress how striking is the contrast between the present literature and that of the ancients. Among the latter we hear nothing of the torments of a diseased or ill regulated mind, at least till the age of Sappho. A man like Rousseau could not have been formed under the institutions of Attica; beings like Childe Harold and Lara of the English poet, or Faust and Tasso of the German, could not have been invented by an early Greek writer. Human nature, and usually under a cheerful aspect, as the dispenser of social happiness and the mother of generous actions, was the theme of the epic and tragic muse. The bard of Chios was the friend of man; and in the spirit of cheerful benevolence exhibits Glaucus rejoicing in his youth and glowing with generous emulation; Nestor, though he had seen three races of men fade before him, still contemplating with much complacency the labors and changes of being; Hector, in the season of danger, yielding for a moment to the softness of parental affection. In Homer the scenes are as on the morning of a battle, when the warhorse is prancing, and the hero exulting, as a strong man before a

race. But Goethe, unmindful of the example of the ancients, presents the field of battle at evening, when the weary are retiring from the conflicts of life with mangled limbs and heavy hearts. He depicts men driven to despair and suicide by hopeless desire, women languishing from a passion, which their own innocence condemns, persons of delicate sensibility brooding over unreal pains, till they turn every object in nature into nutriment for their weakness, and 'drink misanthropy even from the sources of love.' Yet his descriptions are made in the spirit of kindness, not of scorn. The wounds of the affections are touched with a healing hand, and the government of the passions may be learned from the examples, that are given of their ruinous power.

But not only has Goethe described the vicious sentiments and painful excitement, which grow out of refinement; he has also sketched with a light pencil the delicate and amiable sympathies of life, and the noble emotions which can arise only in cultivated minds. By the description of mental sorrow, he controls the feelings of compassion, and by incorporating into his verse and his romances the experience of his life, he becomes a practical guide, though he may more frequently warn against danger, than direct towards purity and virtue.

These remarks are offered as the result of an examination of his whole literary career. Were the criticism of particular works to be attempted, it would be necessary to give praise and blame with circumspection. It would also be a duty to censure some of them with indignation, and to express both surprise and disgust, that a man of fine genius, *conversant with the sentiments and principles which are the living springs of beauty*, a man, who, as he observes of himself, had received the veil of poetry from the hand of truth, should have stooped to win a disgraceful popularity by appeals to the weakness and unworthy passions of human nature, and darkened the clear revelations of celestial beauty by the mixture of earthly passions. But the good and the evil of his labors are concealed in a foreign dialect; and in such cases, it is the most charitable and most useful course to cherish and communicate all that is excellent, while whatever is exceptionable may be suffered to escape censure by remaining unknown.

The poetical character of Goethe can hardly be set in a proper light by an appeal to his minor poetry alone. His songs are various in their tone and sentiments. Some are delicate and tender, some grave and moral, and all distinguished for playful fancy and elegance. 'His errors and his efforts, his sorrows and his way of life, are here but as flowers in the nosegay. His age not less than his youth, his failings not less than his virtues, appear charming in his songs.' It would be desirable to present a few specimens of these exquisite little pieces; but their beauty consists, not in a pointed thought, but in the expression of a feeling, and the grace and harmony of diction. The spirit of them evaporates in a translation, in which the same thoughts might be conveyed, but in a colder manner. There are many beautiful plants, which the most experienced florist could not recognise, were he to see them without their leaves and flowers.

His ballads are remarkable both for their intrinsic beauty, their variety, and the influence which they have exercised on the English, no less than the German literature. They are all characterised by simplicity both in the invention and the style of execution, by harmony of versification, and an easy and rapid narration. In making a few translations from them, the first object will be to express the original with exactness, so that at least an accurate idea of the plan of the original poems may be presented.

'Mignon,' the invitation to Italy, is introduced into the novel, *Wilhelm Meister*, and derives a part of its charms from its adaptation to the character, by whom it is feigned to have been composed.

#### MIGNON.

Knowest thou the land, where groves of citrons flower,  
The golden orange darkling leaves embower,  
The gentle breezes wave from azure skies,  
The myrtle still, and high the laurels rise?  
Knowest thou the land?

O! there, O! there,  
I long with thee, my loved one, to repair.

Knowest thou the house? It rests on pillars tall,  
The chambers gleam, in splendor shines the hall,  
And marble forms on me their eyes incline,

And seem to say, poor child, what grief is thine?  
Knowest thou the house?

O! there, O! there,  
I long with thee, my guardian, to repair.

Knowest thou the hill? Its pathway mid the clouds?  
The journeying mules the mountain vapor shrouds?  
In caverns dwell the dragon's ancient brood;  
The rock is rent, and o'er it pours the flood.  
Knowest thou the hill?

O! there, O! there,  
Our pathway leads, my father, haste, repair!

The bard is called into the presence of his sovereign, and delights the beauty and chivalry of the court by his lyre and his verse. A chain of gold is offered him by the monarch in reward of his skill. He regards it with indifference, and rejecting the golden compensation, asks but for a cup of wine.

He sings, as mid the verdant boughs  
The bird so merrily sings;  
The song, that from the bosom flows,  
Itself its guerdon brings.

'The Violet' first appeared in *Erwin and Elmira*, a melo-drame of no great interest or beauty. But the song is at once tender and delicate, and the German critics describe it as a light effusion of fancy, possessing a magic charm to interest the feelings. It is not perhaps every one, who will consent to find the wizard's power in so airy a trifle. It must be a powerful enchanter, whose spells are obeyed by every spirit, and the amulet, which preserves the faithful, may be to others but a useless bauble. For the rest the ballad may speak for itself.

#### DAS VEILCHEN.

Ein Veilchen auf der Wiese stand,  
Gebückt in sich und unbekannt;  
Es war eie herziges Veilchen.  
Da kam eine junge Schäferinn,  
Mit leichtem Schritt und munterm  
Sinn,  
Daher, Daher,  
Die Wiese her, und sang.

Ach! denkt das Veilchen, wär 'ich  
nur  
Die schönste Blume der Natur,

#### THE VIOLET.

A violet blossom'd on the green,  
With lowly stem, and bloom unseen;  
It was a sweet, wee flower.  
A shepherd maiden came that way  
With lightsome step and aspect gay,  
Came near, came near,  
Came o'er the green with song.

Ah! thought the violet, might I be  
The fairest flower on all the lea,  
Ah! but for one brief hour;



Ach ! nur ein kleines Weilchen,  
 Bis mich das Liebchen abgepflückt,  
 Und an dem Busen matt gedrückt !  
 Ach nur, ach nur,  
 Ein Viertebstündchen lang !

Ach ! aber ach ! das Mädchen kam  
 Und nicht in Acht das Veilchen nahm,  
 Ertrat das arme Veilchen.  
 Es sank und starb und freut sich noch ;  
 Und sterb' ich denn, so sterb' ich doch  
 Durch sie, durch sie,  
 Zu ihren Füßen doch.

And might be pluck'd by that dear  
 maid,  
 And gently on her bosom laid,  
 Ah but, ah but,  
 A few dear moments long.

Alas ! the maiden, as she pass'd,  
 No eye upon the violet cast ;  
 She crush'd the poor, wee flower ;  
 It sank, and dying heaved no sigh,  
 And if I die, at least I die  
 By her, by her,  
 Beneath her feet I die.

‘The Erl King’ is of a higher character, vigorous, tragic, and exquisitely finished. The little poem, which follows, is in like manner founded on a popular German superstition

#### THE ANGLER.

The water purl'd ; the water rose ;  
 An angler near it lay,  
 And held his line in cool repose,  
 And watch'd his nibbling prey.  
 And as he watch'd in pensive mood,  
 The waves apart were flung ;  
 Bright with the waters of the flood,  
 A glittering maid upsprung.

She spake, she sang in accents sweet ;  
 Why lure my brood on high  
 With human skill and fell deceit  
 In day's hot air to die ?  
 Ah ! couldst thou know, how cheerly live  
 The fish upon the ground,  
 Deep in the waves thou too wouldst dive,  
 Where health and rest are found.

The glorious sun his visage laves,  
 The moon, in ocean's bed ;  
 And round their brows the spangling waves  
 A twofold lustre shed.  
 Behold the heavens profound and clear,  
 In moist, reflected blue ;  
 And lo ! thine imaged features here,  
 Deep in the eternal dew.

The water purl'd ; the water rose,  
 And wet his naked feet ;  
 With fond desire his heart o'erflows,  
 As when true lovers meet.

She spake to him ; she sang to him ;  
Poor youth ! with him 'tis o'er ;  
Moved by her spell, he downwards fell,  
And man ne'er saw him more.

'The King in Thule' is found in *Faust*, but is also inserted in the collection of Goethe's ballads. He is far too respectable a character to be trifled with, and as an English dress does not become him, let him remain undisturbed in his original dignity.

The 'Song of the Captive Count' connects, in a pleasing manner, the lively personification of natural objects with expressions of the purest affection.

SONG OF THE CAPTIVE COUNT.

*Count.*

A flower, that 's wondrous fair I know,  
My bosom holds it dear,  
To seek that flower I long to go,  
But am imprison'd here.  
'Tis no light grief oppresses me ;  
For in the days my steps were free,  
I had it always near.

Far round the tower I send mine eye,  
The tower so steep and tall ;  
But nowhere can the flower descry  
From this high castle wall ;  
And him who 'll bring me my desire,  
Or be he knight, or be he squire,  
My dearest friend I 'll call.

*Rose.*

My blossoms near thee I disclose,  
And hear thy wretched plight ;  
Thou meanest me, no doubt, the rose,  
Thou noble, hapless knight.  
A lofty mind in thee is seen,  
And in thy bosom reigns the queen  
Of flowers, as is her right.

*Count.*

Thy crimson bud I duly prize  
In outer robe of green ;  
For this thou 'rt dear in maiden's eyes,

As gold and jewels sheen,  
Thy wreath adorns the fairest brow,  
And yet the flower—it is not thou,  
Whom my still wishes mean.

*Lily.*

The little rose has cause for pride,  
And upwards aye will soar ;  
Yet am I held by many a bride  
The rose's wreath before.  
And beats thy bosom faithfully,  
And art thou true, and pure as I,  
Thou 'lt prize the lily more.

*Count.*

I call myself both chaste and pure,  
And pure from passions low ;  
And yet these walls my limbs immure  
In loneliness and wo.  
Though thou dost seem, in white array'd,  
Like many a pure and beauteous maid,  
One dearer thing I know.

*Pink.*

And dearer I, the pink, must be,  
And me thou sure dost choose,  
Or else the gard'ner ne'er for me  
Such watchful care would use ;  
A crowd of leaves encircling bloom !  
And mine through life the sweet perfume,  
And all the thousand hues !

*Count.*

The pink can no one justly slight,  
The gard'ner's favorite flower ;  
He sets it now beneath the light,  
Now shields it from its power.  
Yet 'tis not pomp, which o'er the rest  
In splendor shines, can make me blest ;  
It is a still, small flower.

*Violet.*

I stand conceal'd, and bending low,  
And do not love to speak ;  
Yet will I, as 'tis fitting now,  
My wonted silence break.

For if 'tis I, thou gallant man,  
Thy heart desires, thine, if I can,  
My perfumes all I'll make.

*Count.*

The violet I esteem indeed,  
So modest and so kind;  
Its fragrance sweet, yet more I need,  
To soothe my anguish'd mind.  
To you the truth will I confess;  
Here mid this rocky dreariness,  
My love I ne'er shall find.

The truest wife by yonder brook  
Will roam the mournful day,  
And hither cast the anxious look,  
Long as immured I stay.  
Whene'er she breaks a small blue flower,  
And says, Forget me not! the power  
I feel, though far away.

Yes, e'en though far, I feel its might,  
For true love joins us twain,  
And therefore mid the dungeon's night  
I still in life remain.  
And sinks my heart at my hard lot,  
I but exclaim; Forget me not!  
And straight new life regain.

Tales of sorrow are no longer in vogue; yet the German inventions on supernatural subjects have exercised a strong and continuing influence on some of the greatest English poets of the present age. Perhaps the world is indebted for *Manfred* to the intimate acquaintance of Monk Lewis with the German literature. Lord Byron was himself no proficient in the German language, but in his early youth received of Lewis an outline of Goethe's *Faust*, and this may have been, probably was, the germ of that English tragedy.

Time and opportunity would fail, should it be attempted to transfer to the English all that is original, or beautiful in the shorter poems of Goethe. Many of them are distinguished for their truth, gravity, elegance, and are specimens of the finest moral poetry of his country. But they are in many points so peculiar, that an intimate acquaintance with them can alone make their worth understood. The poet's views

of life, his experience, his sorrows, his principles are all entrusted to his muse. Who has not heard of the vanity of pursuit, the certainty that hope will be disappointed, and that the restless activity and ambition of youth are after all to be followed only by the decrepitude and indolence of age? Goethe repeats the same lesson, but it is in an allegory. The ancient castle stands in its majesty; the heroes, who have ruled in it, and returned to it in victory, are now but shadows; the last survivor of the house is just on the point of commencing in his turn the unsuccessful pursuit after glory and happiness.

#### THE SALUTATION OF A SPIRIT.

High on the castle's ancient walls  
The warrior's shade appears;  
Who to the bark that's passing calls,  
And thus its passage cheers.

Behold! these sinews once were strong;  
This heart was firm and bold;  
Mid war and glory, feast and song,  
My earthly years were told.

Restless through half of life I ran,  
In half have sought for ease;  
What then? Thou bark! that sails with man,  
Haste, haste to cleave the seas.

The moral of these lines is not disheartening. Though youth can promise itself no other happiness than that of constant exertion, and age can expect no other enjoyment than what attends on tranquillity and repose, the course of life must still be run fearlessly and in the spirit of trust.

In another poem, the vanity of pleasure is illustrated by comparing it to an insect of brilliant wings, shining splendidly so long as it can buzz and sparkle in the sun, but losing its lustre, when examined by the hand of impertinent curiosity.

#### Joy.

Where yonder fountain streams,  
What fluttering insect gleams?  
She changes oft her hues,  
As the cameleons use;  
Now white, now dark she seems;

Now red, now blue,  
 Now blue, now green ;  
 How bright must she appear,  
 Could I behold her near !

The Libellula sings, and flits,  
 In circles soars, nor rests her wing.—  
 Hist ! on the willow now she sits—  
 And now I've caught the beauteous thing,  
 And gaze ; but ah ! what meets my view ?  
 Her brilliant tints a touch destroys,  
 And leaves a dark and cheerless blue.

This is thy fate, anatomist of thy joys.

Among all the poems of Goethe there is but one regular fable.

#### THE EAGLE AND THE DOVE.

In search of prey an eagle flew  
 In towering pride ; a fowler threw  
 The pointed shaft, that, truly aimed,  
 Reach'd the high bird ; his wing is maim'd.  
 Downwards he drops enfeebled to the ground ;  
 Hid in a grove, where myrtles bloom'd around ;  
 For three long days he chew'd upon his grief,  
 And for three long, long nights found no relief.  
 Nature at length, whose balsam heals  
 All pain, and everywhere is found,  
 Soothed his distress and heal'd his wound.  
 Then from the bushes' shade he steals,  
 And wide expands his wings. Alas !  
 His pinion's force the shaft had borne away,  
 And he no more above the clouds can pass,  
 And scarcely rise to seize unworthy prey.  
 Involved in inward misery  
 On a low rock he rests beside the brook,  
 Casts on the oak, the heavens, a wistful look,  
 And a tear fills his haughty eye.  
 On rustling pinions through the myrtle grove  
 Attended by his mate a dove drew near.  
 They hop from branch to branch, and nodding rove  
 O'er golden sand, and by the riv'let clear.  
 As gaily thus the pair advance,  
 With sparkling eye and am'rous glance.  
 They see the bird, that secret mourns :

And t'wards the bush that hid his deep distress,  
Selfsatisfied in social friendliness,  
On airy wing the dove inquiring turns.  
Thou'rt sad, he softly lisps; be of good cheer;  
All thou canst need for happiness is here.  
Canst thou not rest beneath the golden bough,  
Which shields thee from the noon's consuming glow?  
On the soft moss beside the brook recline,  
And gaze where evening's varying colors shine?  
Thy walks are o'er the dews of op'ning flowers,  
And through the bushes of the fragrant wood;  
Where thou canst gather fit and grateful food;  
And where the silver fountain purely pours,  
A cooling draught to quench short thirst canst find.  
True happiness is a contented mind,  
And a contented mind is everywhere content.  
O wise one! spake the eagle, and he sent  
An earnest look of deeper grief above;  
O wisdom! thou dost counsel as the dove.

The truth of this conclusion most men can acknowledge. It is in vain to demonstrate to an ambitious man the folly of his ambition, or to make the artist and the poet, who are thirsting for praise, confess that men's opinions are worth nothing. Ambition continues in power; the passion for praise still excites and controls; men desire what they do not possess, what they do not need, and what they never can attain; and he, who feels himself to have been created for a high station, to which he has forfeited his claim, cannot but be dissatisfied with himself and with the world.

But the works of Goethe are not without lessons of practical morality. Though he makes no boasts of being himself a religious man, he acknowledges religion to be essentially the best foundation of a good character, and considers cooperation with others in works of practical utility, and in the execution of just and righteous designs, the safest and the happiest course. He has also drawn many exquisite and elevating pictures of female excellence, has illustrated the superiority of domestic life, and has given the noblest encomiums to that sex, which knows how to establish order and economy, to feel, and to endure. 'Ye call woman fickle,' says he, 'ye err; she but roams in search of a steadfast man.' Though Goethe has so often delineated imaginary woes, and carried

his readers into a world of fiction, yet it is the tendency of his writings to promote a love for the arts, for activity, for truth. They do not merely teach us to be satisfied with the world, but to bear with it, by showing how rich it is in the means of acquiring virtues, and of performing just and benevolent deeds.

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ART. IV.—*The American Farmer, containing Original Essays and Selections on Rural Economy and Internal Improvements ; with Illustrative Engravings and the Prices Current of Country Produce.* JOHN S. SKINNER, Editor. 5 vols. 4to. Baltimore. 1821—1824.

THE wealth of a nation, and consequently the prosperity and happiness of the community, depend on three sources of industry, usually denominated agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial. The labored discussions into which political economists have entered, respecting the comparative importance of these modes, and the zeal with which each has been defended in preference to the other two, have been more frequently marked with local predilections and love of theory, than with consistency and broad views of the subject. In its general and abstract sense the topic cannot be discussed ; that is, it is wholly impossible to decide, upon any general principles, whether agriculture, manufacture, or commerce, affords the best field for human industry. A union of the three is essential to the well being, nay to the existence of civilised society, and it depends wholly on the circumstances of any particular country, or district, whether one or the other ought to receive the greatest degree of attention. A good government will take care to encourage them all, and to strengthen each in proportion as the others may be gaining an undue ascendancy ; and the largest amount of public happiness will be enjoyed by that nation, in which these several branches of industry flourish together, and with nearly an equal degree of activity.

It was the theory of a class of French writers on political economy, of whom Quesnai was at the head, that the only productive labor was that bestowed in cultivating the earth.